

Sparkling Wanderers Wreck Dons' Record

By 'NOVA'

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Wimbledon 0

PROUD Wimbledon, Isthmian League champions for the last two seasons and amateur cup winners last year, came to Loakes Park on Wednesday evening topping the league table with an unbeaten record — but after 90 minutes of pulsating football, they returned to London after conceding their first league defeat of the season.

With the largest crowd of the season urging them on almost fanatically, the Wanderers played with such determination and power that few sides would have tamed them.

What actual effect the partisan crowd had on the proceedings is hard to tell. But obviously they unsettled the Wimbledon players from the start. Unfortunately some fans felt more than words were needed and just after half-time the referee ordered an announcement over the loudspeaker threatening to abandon the game if any more fireworks were thrown at the Wimbledon goalkeeper and defenders!

At this period Wycombe were leading with a goal from Horseman in the 14th minute. But with the official warning the fans quietened down, realising they were jeopardising their own team's chance of victory.

DEFENCE IMPROVEMENT

In fact, with a little more steadiness in front of goal, Wimbledon might at least have salvaged a point, but Wycombe displayed the usual Wimbledon talents of fast, deadly tackling and quick-striking attacks.

The home defence, although split wide open in a few raids, looked much safer than of late. Peter Roystone dominated the middle of the field and George Pullin and Alistair Lewis kept a strangle-hold on the wingers.

At wing-half Thomas showed improved form but Gale has not yet recovered his old zip. In attack the inside trio got through a tremendous amount of work but it was wingers Worley and Hodges who seemed most likely to score.

HODGES SHINES

Hodges gave England full-back John Martin a harrowing evening and it was he who clinched victory for Wycombe in the second half. With only a minute gone, he raced past four defenders and his short stabbing pass across goal could only be helped into the net by left-half Ted Murphy. Later in the game Hodges was unfortunately left idle.

It was no more than Wycombe deserved, for in the first half they were by far the more dangerous side.

After the second goal Wimbledon came more into the play, but not even the tireless promptings of their brilliant skipper Roy Law could break the stubborn home defence.

Wycombe: D. Syrett, A. Lewis, G. Pullin, D. Thomas, P. Roystone, C. Gale, L. Worley, J. Cooper, D. Bassett, T. Horseman, P. Hodges.

Wimbledon: B. Langfield, J. Martin, D. Willis, B. Ardrey, R. Law, T. Murphy, B. Keats, L. Brown, J. Wallis, G. Hamm, N. Williams.